

PRESS RELEASE



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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FRENCH PRINTS AND DRAWINGS ON DISPLAY

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French Prints and Drawings in the Age of the Bourbons, 1589-1792 represents with nearly ninety works a national graphic style which emerged in France during the late sixteenth century and reached fruition by the late eighteenth. To illustrate that artistic development during the reigns, and often under the patronage, of successive kings of the Bourbon family dynasty, Hilliard Goldfarb, assistant curator (CMA-CWRU) of prints and drawings, has selected from the Museum collection works by about forty artists, including such masters as Claude, Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard.

Among the earlier artists represented is Primaticcio (1504-70), one of the Italian masters whose decoration of the royal castle at Fontainebleau inspired French artists to adopt the Italian Mannerist style. The etchings of Jacques Bellange (1594-1638) embody the elegant artifice of Mannerism, achieved in part by arbitrary elongation and distortion of forms.

During the seventeenth century, Claude Lorraine and other French masters worked in Italy, maintaining the ties which were so productive for French artists. At the same time, an increasing number also turned to Flemish models for inspiration. Abraham Bosse's (1602-76) engravings of domestic interiors, for example, reflect the subject matter and composition of Northern genre paintings, and the Baroque majesty of Rubens informs the drawings of Charles de la Fosse (1636-1716).

The eighteenth century marked the full synthesis of Italian and Flemish influences in the distinctive and influential French Rococo style, brought to its highest expression by Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard. This special exhibition traces the rise of a graphic style which set a standard for eighteenth-century art throughout Europe.

For additional information or photographs, please contact the Public Relations Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.